
NEWS STATEMENT BY THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL MARKETING COUNCIL

APPLICATION FOR THE CONTINUATION OF STATUTORY MEASURES (RECORDS & RETURNS AND REGISTRATION) TO COLLECT EXPORT DATA RELATING TO TABLE GRAPES, DECIDUOUS FRUIT, DRIED GRAPES, BERRIES, SUBTROPICAL AND CITRUS FRUIT, IN TERMS OF THE MARKETING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS ACT (ACT NO 47 OF 1996)

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS / INPUTS FROM ROLE PLAYERS IN THE FRUIT INDUSTRY

On 21 September 2022, Agri-Hub applied, on behalf of directly affected groups in the fruit industry, to the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, for the continuation and amendment of statutory measures (records & returns and registration) on table grapes, deciduous fruit, dried grapes, berries, subtropical and citrus fruit, for a new four-year period (from date of implementation). The current statutory measures were implemented on 12 April 2019 and are due to expire on 11 April 2023.

During 2011, Agri-Hub, a Section 21 Company, was formed with the sole purpose of information gathering, collection and distribution in respect of fruit exported from South Africa.

In terms of the proposal, Agri-Hub will be responsible for the registration of directly affected groups, collection, and dissemination of information associated with the statutory measures that are requested for in terms of Agri-Hub's mandate as an objective and reliable provider of information in the South African fruit industry.

Market participants in the fruit industry (growers, pack houses, depots and exporters), are currently providing data. Their data is submitted via the industry standard transmission files, namely the Dispatch Transmission -, Mates Transmission -, Stock Transmission -, Intake Transmission - and Railings Transmission files and industry standard Application Programming Interfaces.

These files are created by the systems that the stakeholders are using, supplied by the participating Information Service Providers. Agri-Hub initially required individual permission from the stakeholders to be able to use the data, until the current statutory measures were put in place.

However, through the previous voluntarily basis, only $\pm 75\%$ of fruit export data was collected, but with the implementation of the statutory measures, more than 95% of fruit export data was collected, which is deemed adequate for making strategic and informed marketing decisions.

Agri-Hub argues that information to be obtained in terms of the proposed statutory measures (registration and records & returns) is deemed to be essential for the market to operate effectively. The supply of generic market information to all role players on a continuous basis, is therefore essential.

The fruit industry requested the following statutory measures, namely –

- Records & returns: To be able to disseminate information as accurately as possible it is necessary for growers, exporters, pack houses, depots, marketers and information service providers to render records and returns on an individual basis.
- Registration: The system of compulsory registration of the growers, exporters, pack houses, depots, marketers and information service providers involved, will assist the administration of the statutory measure relating to records and returns.

The relevant grower associations (citrus, grapes, pome- and stone fruit) contributes financially and proportionally to Agri-Hub's annual expenditure. Due to the funding of Agri-Hub by the four associations, information can currently be released free of charge to participants.

Any information obtained will be dealt with in a confidential manner by Agri-Hub and no sensitive client-specific information will be made available to any party without the prior approval of the party whose rights may be affected. Only processed data which is stripped of all identifying characteristics i.e. exporter, grower, receiver, will be released.

Directly affected groups in the fruit industry are kindly requested to submit any comments regarding support or objections relating to the proposed establishment of statutory measures to the NAMC, in writing (e-mail to mathildavdw@namc.co.za) before or on 11 November 2022, to enable the Council to finalise its investigation and to a recommendation to the Minister in this regard.